

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 INR-10 SSO-00 IO-13 L-03 PA-03

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O 191615Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4633

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR PFOR BF

SUBJ: NARCOTICS CASE

REF: NASSAU 1338

FOLLOWING REPEATED YOU QUOTE

O 191559Z SEP 73

FM CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL

TO RUEHBH/AMEMBASSY NASSAU BWI

INFO RUEBJGA/COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC

RUEDEEA/COMLANTAREA COGARD NEW YORK NY

TB

UNCLAS

PRESS RELEASE M/V GILMA I

IN ONE OF THE LARGEST NARCOTIC SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS IN THE COAST GUARD'S HISTORY, AN ESTIMATED FIVE MILLION DOLLARS OF MARIJUANA HAS BEEN RECOVERED, A MIAMI BASED VESSEL HAS BEEN SEIZED, AND TWO MEN ARRESTED TODAY. NEARLY EIGHT TONS OF THE NARCOTIC WERE RECOVERED. THE VESSEL, THE GILMA I, IS NOW UNDER TOW BY THE COAST GUARD CUTTER COURAGEOUS. THE TWO MEN, IDENTIFIED AS NELSON LOPEZ PAZ AND DAGOBERTO NORQUEZ, ARE UNDER CONFINEMENT AND ARE BEING INTERROGATED BY DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OFFICIALS.

THE ENTIRE SEARCH AND SEIZURE OPERATION TOOK PLACE WITH THE UNCLASSIFIED

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COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE

BAHAMAS. IN ADDITION TO THE COURAGEOUS, THE COAST GUARD CUTTER POINT BARNES, A HELICOPTER AND A FIXED WING PLANE FROM THE COAST GUARD AIRSTATION IN MIAMI, AND A DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PLANE TOOK PART IN THE NARCOTIC HAUL. GILMA I WAS SPOTTED SUNDAY BY THE COURAGEOUS NEAR ANQUILLA CAY, AND REFUSED A REQUEST TO BE BOARDED BY THE CUTTER. AFTER A CAT AND MOUSE GAME, IN WHICH THE 42-FOOT VESSEL CONTINUED TO EVADE THE CUTTER, THE GILMA I TOOK SANCTUARY IN BAHAMIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS WHILE COAST GUARD UNITS BEGAN CLOSE SURVEILLANCE. THE VESSEL THEN BEGAN THROWING BARRELS OVERBOARD. WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE BAHAMIAN GOVERNMENT THESE WERE RECOVERED BY THE COURAGEOUS AND FOUND TO CONTAIN MARIJUANA. ADDITIONAL CONTAINERS OF THE DRUG WERE LATER FOUND ON AN ISLAND IN THE CAY SAL BANKS. DURING THE NIGHT, CLOSE RADAR SURVEILLANCE WAS KEPT ON THE GILMA I AND AT ABOUT EIGHT O'CLOCK THIS MORNING, THE VESSEL SURRENDERED TO COURAGEOUS AND THE TWO SUSPECTS WERE TAKEN ABOARD. ALL THE RECOVERIES OF MARIJUANA WERE WITH THE PERMISSION OF OR REQUEST OF THE BAHAMIAN GOVERNMENT. THE COURAGEOUS, WITH GILMA I IN TOW, THE SUSPECTS AND HER LOAD OF NARCOTICS ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE AT COAST GUARD BASE IN MIAMI BEACH AT 9 A.M. THURSDAY MORNING.

TB UNQUOTE.
SPIERS

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